

### *Amendments to the Claims*

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A computer system, comprising:

an operating system;

a file system locally mounted in the operating system;

a plurality of ~~local~~ users associated with the operating system, each user having a plurality of local user processes that are associated with that user at least one corresponding local user process, at least one of and all the plurality of local user processes running locally in the computer system under the control of the operating system;

at least one shareable file from the file system that is accessible using a file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system by any of the plurality of the local user processes, wherein each shareable file accessible using the file system mechanism is stored in a file storage memory location and is associated with a file path in the file system;

a shareable file tree comprising the file path of each shareable file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system;

a user file tree associated with [[a]] each user and associated with the shareable file tree, mounted locally in the file system and accessible by the user's local user processes using the file system calls of the operating system, wherein the user file tree comprises at least one link inside the file system, wherein each link is associated with the file path of a referenced file accessible using the ~~file system~~ file system access mechanism calls of the operating system, such that the

user file tree points to the referenced file in response to the local user process request to access a file, and

wherein multiple user file trees have the same mounting point; and

a private file area associated with each ~~local~~ user, wherein each ~~local~~ user's private file area stores a file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system but there are no paths for ~~local~~ other user's local user ~~process~~ processes to access, using file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system, the files from any other ~~local~~ user's private file area of the computer system, and

wherein each user can only access files in a file associated with a mount point corresponding to that user's private file area.

2. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein the user file tree is initially populated with links corresponding to the file path of a selected number of shareable files, such that the user file tree points to a selected shareable file in response to a request to access the selected shareable file but not to modify the shareable file.

3. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 2, wherein the user file tree is initially populated with one or more links corresponding to the file paths to the shareable files.

4. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein the operating system copies a selected shareable file to a private file area associated with one of the plurality of users and modifies the user file tree associated with that user such that the link associated with

the selected shareable file, points to the copy of the selected shareable file instead of the selected shareable file, in response to an attempt to modify the selected shareable file.

5. (original) The computer system of Claim 4, wherein the modification of the user file tree is transparent to the user.

6. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein at least one private file area is associated with a selected set of the plurality of users.

7. (original) The computer system of Claim 6, wherein the selected set of the plurality of users is associated with the operating system.

8. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein the private file areas store files that do not comprise a link to either the user file tree or the shareable file tree.

9. (original) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein the user file tree further comprises metadata.

10. (original) The computer system of Claim 9, wherein a link located in the user file tree further comprises the metadata.

11. (original) The computer system of Claim 10, wherein the metadata comprises data associated with the user file tree.

12. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 11, wherein the metadata allows the user to define a permitted access to a selected shareable file without copying the selected shareable file into the private file area.

13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the steps of: receiving a local user process request to access a selected shareable file but not to modify the shareable file; and pointing to the selected shareable file in response to the local user process request.

15. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the steps of: receiving a local user process request to access a selected shareable file to modify the shareable file; copying the selected shareable file into the private file area associated with the user; modifying the user file tree associated with the user such that the link associated with the selected shareable file point to the copy of the selected shareable file located in the private file area associated with the user.

16. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the steps of: receiving a local user process request to delete a selected shareable file; and deleting the link located in the user file tree that is associated with the selected shareable file in response to the local user process request to delete the selected shareable file.

17. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a local user process request to delete a selected private file stored in the private file area, wherein the selected private file is not associated with a link; and

deleting the selected private file in response to the local user process request to delete the selected private file.

18. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a local user process request to delete a selected private file stored in the private file area, wherein the selected private file is associated with a link in the user file tree;

deleting the selected private file in response to the local user process request to delete the selected private file; and

deleting the link associated with the selected private file in response to the local user process request to delete the selected private file.

19. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein the step of creating a private file area further comprises the step of creating a private file area associated with a selected set of the plurality of users.

20. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, further comprising the step of creating a metadata associated with a selected one of the links associated with a shareable file in the shareable file tree.

21. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein the links are files.

22. (previously presented) The computer system of Claim 1, wherein only one version of a shareable file is maintained by the file system.

23. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein the links are files.

24. (currently amended) The method of Claim 26, wherein only one version of a shareable file is maintained by the file system.

25. (canceled)

26. (currently amended) A method for providing access to shareable files in a computer network to a plurality of local user processes, comprising the steps of:

initializing an operating system;

mounting a file system locally in the operating system;

instantiating a plurality of ~~local~~ users, each user having at least one corresponding local user process, with ~~at least one of~~ the plurality of local user processes running locally in the computer system under the control of the operating system;

making at least one shareable file from the file system accessible using a file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system of the operating system by any of the plurality of the local user processes, wherein each shareable file accessible using the file system means is stored in a file storage memory location and is associated with a file path in the file system,

wherein a shareable file tree comprises the file path of each shareable file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system;

associating a user file tree ~~associated~~ with a corresponding each user, with and the shareable file tree, with that user's local user processes, mounted locally in the file system and

accessible by the user's local user processes using the file system calls of the operating system,  
wherein the user file tree comprises at least one link inside the file system, wherein each link is  
associated with the file path of a referenced file accessible using the ~~file system~~ file system  
~~access mechanism calls of the operating system,~~ such that the user file tree points to the  
referenced file in response to the local user process a request to access a file, and  
wherein multiple user file trees have the same mounting point; and

associating a private file area with each local user, wherein each local user's private file  
area stores a file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism calls of the operating system,~~  
but there are no paths for ~~local~~ other user's local user ~~process~~ processes to access, using file  
system ~~access mechanism calls of the operating system,~~ the files from any other local user's  
private file area of the computer system, and

wherein each user can only access files in a file associated with a mount point  
corresponding to that user's private file area.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the operating system  
isolates the file system access for the local user processes to allow the local user processes to  
access any of the file path of the shareable file and the file path of a file from the private file area  
associated with the local user processes owned by that user.

28. (currently amended) A computer system, comprising:

an operating system;

a local file system locally accessible by the operating system;

a plurality of ~~local~~ users, each user having a corresponding local user process;

at least one of the local user processes running locally in the computer system under the control of the operating system;

at least one shareable file from the file system that is accessible using a file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system of the operating system by the local user processes, wherein each shareable file is associated with a file path in the file system, and wherein the computer system maintains only one version of any shareable file;

a shareable file tree comprising the file path of each shareable file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system;

a user file tree associated with each ~~local~~ user, ~~and with~~ the shareable file tree, mounted locally in the file system and accessible by the user's local user processes using the file system calls of the operating system, wherein the user file tree comprises at least one link in the file system, wherein each link is associated with the file path of a referenced file accessible using the ~~file system~~ file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system, such that the user file tree points to the referenced file in response to the local user process request to access a file; and

a private file area associated with each local user, wherein each local user's private file area stores a file accessible using the file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system, but there are no paths for ~~local other user's local~~ user ~~process~~ processes to access, using file system ~~access mechanism~~ calls of the operating system, the files from any other local user's private file area, and

wherein each user can only access files in a file associated with a mount point corresponding to that user's private file area.